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Only Literates Should Vote"; Will the U.S. Be Sold Down the UN River?

Saint Louis Globe-Democrat

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ONLY LITERATES SHOULD VOTE!

The Civil Rights Commission—whose life Congress has just prolonged for two years—recommends literacy tests for voters be abolished by act of Congress through the nation.

It seems to make no difference that such a proposal is directly contrary to the United States Constitution and an abortion of common sense.

Even apostles of lowest common-denominator democracy ought to be able to see this. Perhaps they are too myopic with fervor to care about the Constitution or reason.

As everyone should know, including commission members, the Constitution specifically provides individual states shall decide on voter qualifications—not Congress or a civil rights bureaucracy tucked away in some Washington aerie.

What this agency asks would require an amendment, which would never be passed, or Supreme Court surgery on the Constitution, which would never be tolerated.

Why should anyone be permitted to cast a ballot, if he cannot read the issues or faintly understand them—perhaps not even read the names of candidates?

As the New York Herald Tribune observes, few would seriously argue infants or the insane should have the right to vote; they are not competent or responsible. Neither are illiterates.

It would be wrong to assume—and who does?—that all who presently vote are competent and

responsible. But fundamental law of the nation guarantees states the right to establish certain qualifications so the ballot will be as intelligently cast as possible in a popular-franchise society.

The average intelligence of voters in America, in any democratic state, leaves much to be desired—a price for the democratic system, but worth it. It makes no vestigial sense, however, to further dilute this intelligence below the literacy line.

The civil rights advocates argue literacy tests have been brutally abused in some states. That's sadly true. They have been used to bar Negroes from the polls for generations.

This is a shameful distortion of state's rights. But it is bad administration of law that's at fault—not the Constitution. Or the underlying purpose of literacy qualifications.

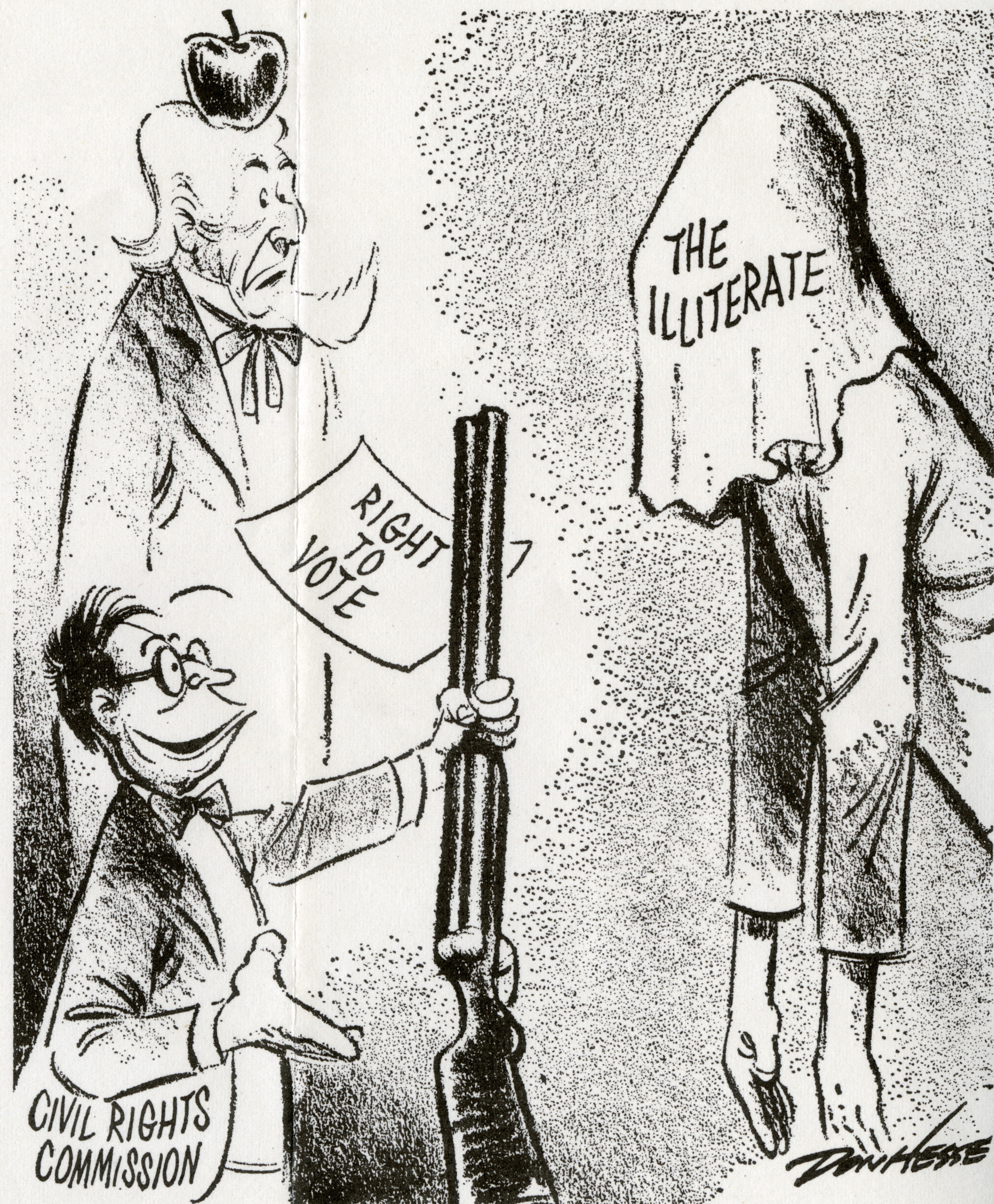
As Congressman Tom Curtis of St. Louis recently declared on the floor of the House, too often civil rights folk use all their influence to insure a freely cast ballot.

They ignore, as Congress has ignored, the right to have the ballot counted honestly. One right without the other is meaningless.

What the nation needs is a strengthening of literacy tests and basic qualifications for voters, not a headache ball demolishing ballot safeguards that now exist.

If millions go to the polls and don't know what they are voting for, both the nation and democracy suffer.

'All You Need Do Is Pull the Trigger'



THE MAIL BAG

Will the U.S. Be Sold Down the UN River?

To the Editor:

In the rush that accompanies a closing session of Congress and amid preparations for the

Communist take-over may not be the most unfortunate.

Public opinion may yet prevent this debacle.

Country Satire

To the Editor:

Must we be faced with the